

Study Question #6

6. Have you been called to minister (servanthood)? If so, what things have constituted this call? If not, what are you doing to be ready for His calling?

Have I been called to minister? That is not a question that can not be taken lightly nor can it be ignored. The Bible states in Romans 11:29, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." There is no middle ground, we can either embrace the call of God on our lives or we can defy it. But first we must recognize it, to respond to it. So as I endeavor to give a absolute answer to this question; I look back on the pages of my life to see the hand of God at work and I listen for his voice. Is he calling me to preach his Gospel?

Paul said in Galatians 1:15, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace." God had a calling on my life even before I was born. Imagine this thought; even before there was slightest bit of brain activity in my head to constitute my existence, before even my parent's parents thought of having children, before Adam breathed his first breath; God had a plan for me life, God had a calling on my life. But what is that calling?

As I examined my life, I discovered some heritage of my grandfather and grandmother that I can say had an effect on my life, whether directly or indirectly. I cannot tell you when either of my grandparents were born, so I start this story from when they were married through an arranged marriage, which is was the custom in India and is still for the most part the way marriage is done. Not too many years after their marriage my grandmother got saved. She accepted Christ even though all of her family was against her in this decision, including her husband at first. Her parents had plenty of money. And she used to wear a lot of gold and array and etc like that but when she got saved she took it all off and people realized and her family realized. Because of her decision for Christ, which deferred from their family religion, it left a rift in the family. No, her parents did not disown her but they just never talked to each other for a long time. Now this decision that my grandmother made for Christ even against her own family was not left fruitless. Nobody in my grandmother's side of the family had ever been a Christian. But in time because of the life that she lived and the grace of God; some of my uncles and other family members got saved. What was even more surprising was that there was a Jacobists priest in the family who gave up his religion and gave his heart to Jesus.

Now she had prayed many times for her husband. And God had been tugging at my grandfather's heart. One day he was praying under a cashew tree; and he said, "God if you're real change the fruit on this tree to a green ripe piece of fruit. Now when he had examined the tree earlier he saw that all the fruit on this tree was very red and unripe (cashew fruit only falls when it is really ripe). So while he was praying a piece of green, ripe fruit fell on his head. God had been moving left and right on his behalf to show him that he was real. One day a preacher came to his house; and talked to him about Jesus and he received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. My grandfather got saved in 1953 right after my mother was born. God had really changed my grandfather's life. He was a real man of prayer. My grandfather was a hard worker. He was a business man. He sold rice patties; from the farmer to the people. He was like the middle man. Then he used to do irrigation for the fields and crops. A lot of times it was very far away and he had to walk a long ways to work on whatever job he had. There were dangers of walking so far because many times so late at night he had to walk home through the water with snakes and other dangers which could present themselves as you could imagine. Whatever work he could do he would do to support his family (and there is no retirement in India). He went through many hard times. There was a time when he had a few children already and his wife was pregnant and they

needed a house (and what you think of house there is nothing like anything of our houses here). So he began to fast and pray and God supplied the money came eventually for the house. God moved many times and worked many miracles just to supply food for the family (it was a big family). My grandfather was a good man of integrity; he was very well known among the town and was like a grandfather for many. My grandfather established Christ as the center of the home. Every morning, everybody got up to pray at 5:00 a.m. and at 6:00 a.m. the family got together to pray and read the Bible. Nobody was called; you just got up and was there ready. Every night at 6:00 p.m. you were there for the family prayer time. They sang, each one read the Bible, than he would explain and they would pray. There were no exceptions; you were just there an you got all your errands and work done before than. Everybody had their homework done before 6:00 p.m. (it could last from 1-2 hours or more). Many times in the middle of the night at 3 a.m. he would be praying and most times my grandmother was with him praying. He was a man of fasting and prayer. He said once, "We seem to fast only when there is little or no food but the greater test (call) is to fast and pray even when there is much food." My grandfather was not a preacher but he shared the gospel to everyone he knew both with words and the life that he lived. He went to every church meeting (street meetings, whatever meeting) that there was. A rule that my grandfather had was that before anyone left the house they would pray. No exceptions. It didn't matter if they were Christians or not. My Grandfather prayed.

I have been told that my grandfather from the day I was born or even before had been praying that God would make me a preacher who would spread the word in a mighty way. For some reason he felt the call to pray for me specifically to be a preacher. Because from what I can gather from family members he didn't pray for anyone else in the family to be a preacher, except me.

Now there was one time when he was at the brink of death and they prayed and the Lord granted him more life. This time the Holy Spirit said not to pray. So my grandfather knew he was leaving this old earth. My grandfather worked hard to the day he died. That week he completed all his work and got things in order. He picked out a very inexpensive casket. He didn't care about this old flesh. My Aunt was at nursing school but that week my grandfather went and brought her home and said when I die don't you cry. And he also wanted her to sing a song for church and so he could give it to relatives. That song was; "By and by when the morning comes, when the saints of God are gathering home, we will tell the story of how we've overcome, when we understand it better by and by."

(In India they are supposed to only have one person per family to testify and the person who testifies is supposed to be moderate in his time. Now the reason that they do this is because if they didn't they would be there all day, because everybody wants to testify.) That Sunday my grandfather got up and testified for a long time and when he sat down he went home to be with Jesus. During the time that my grandfather was testifying a man had a vision of a baby being taken home to heaven. This man did not know my grandfather and he didn't even know he passed away until after the service. My grandfather passed away in 1989.

I never met my grandfather and my grandmother I have only seen once. But I believe that their prayers had a profound effect on life; which I will probably never be able to comprehend.

Matthew: Gift of God / Kuriakose: called out ones / Levi: joined
I was born in 1982 at the Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine.

I ran out of time to complete this: I was going to go piece by piece through my whole life.

But to answer the question in a concise answer. I believe I have been called to minister (servanthood).

Some things that have constituted that call. God putting that inner conviction in my heart. Also after God put a desire in my heart, the Lord granted me with a little ability. I could barely talk. I wasn't a speaker in the least bit. But God gave some ability. And since a call of God constitutes "an inner conviction given by the Holy Spirit and confirmed by the Word of God and the Body of Christ." To confirm that last part; I have had people from the body of Christ confirm that they see the call of God on my life.

If this isn't good enough I can try to finish it and give it to you as soon as possible. I had planned to do my whole testimony but time ran out. And this really only the introduction. I hope this is good enough.